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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/532,633	04/25/2005	Yves Leblanc	MC064YP	9440
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MERCK AND CO., INC				
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RAHWAY, NJ 07065-0907				
EXAMINER				
DESAL, RITA J				
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
1625				
MAIL DATE		DELIVERY MODE		
03/13/2008		PAPER		

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/532,633

Applicant(s)

LEBLANC ET AL.

Examiner

Rita J. Desai

Art Unit

1625

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 1 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-28 and 30 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 29 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☒ Claim(s) 1-30 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SF/ICE)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: ____.

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

Restriction is required under 35 U.S.C. 121 and 372.

This application contains the following inventions or groups of inventions which are not so linked as to form a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1.

In accordance with 37 CFR 1.499, applicant is required, in reply to this action, to elect a single invention to which the claims must be restricted.

Group I, claim(s) 1-21, drawn to compounds and pharmaceutical composition wherein m is 2, X1 is N, X4 is SO₂Me, or C-alkyl Y1 is S and Ar is a hetero ring, Q is COOH, X2 are C.

Group II, claim(s) 1-21, 27, 28, 30, drawn to compounds and pharmaceutical compositions wherein m is 2, X1 is N, Y1 is S, Ar is phenyl, X4 is CSO₂ Me or C-alkyl (CR_g – R_g is alkyl). X2 are C

Group III, claim(s) 1-21, 27, 28, 30, drawn to compounds and pharmaceutical compositions wherein X1 is a CH or CCH₃, and X3 is a N, Y1 is a S, m is 1 or 2, and X4 is CSO₂CH₃. X2 is C

Group IV, claim(s) 1-21, 27, 28, 30, drawn to compounds and compositions wherein X1-X4, Y1, Ar, and all other variables are other than those as given in the groups above.

Group V, claim(s) 22, drawn to a complex composition drawn to a composition of the compounds of one of the groups above and another active ingredient.

Group VI, claim(s) 23-26, drawn to a method of treating using the compounds of one of the groups from I-IV.

Claim 29 being a use claim is non-statutory has been withdrawn.

The inventions listed as Groups I-IV do not relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1 because, under PCT Rule 13.2, they lack the same or corresponding special technical features for the following reasons:

Art Unit: 1625

(f) Markush Practice. The situation involving the so-called Markush practice wherein a single claim defines alternatives (chemical or non-chemical) is also governed by Rule 13.2. In this special situation, the requirement of a technical interrelationship and the same or corresponding special technical features as defined in Rule 13.2, shall be considered to be met when the alternatives are of a similar nature.

(i) When the Markush grouping is for alternatives of chemical compounds, they shall be regarded as being of a similar nature where the following criteria are fulfilled:

(A) all alternatives have a common property or activity, **and**

(B)(1) a common structure is present, i.e., a significant structural element is shared by all of the alternatives, or

(B)(2) in cases where the common structure cannot be the unifying criteria, all alternatives belong to a recognized class of chemical compounds in the art to which the invention pertains.

(ii) In paragraph (f)(i)(B)(1), above, the words "significant structural element is shared by all of the alternatives" refer to cases where the compounds share a common chemical structure which occupies a large portion of their structures, or in case the compounds have in common only a small portion of their structures, the commonly shared structure constitutes a structurally distinctive portion in view of the existing prior art. The structural element may be a single component or a combination of individual components linked together.

The different X's, Y's, R's Q and Ar substituents have so many variables with the heterocyclic and non-hetero groupings, they have different bonding and properties, and have achieved a different status in the art, and is burdensome to search and hence are objected to as being drawn to an improper Markush group on the grounds of lack of a common nucleus. The terms X's, Y's, R's Q and Ar, are so broad in scope that a prior art reference anticipating the claims with respect to one member under 35 USC 102(b) would not render obvious the same claims under 35 USC 103a with respect to another member.

A telephone call was made to Ms. Mollie Yang on 3/4/08 to request an oral election to the above restriction requirement, but did not result in an election being made.

Applicant is advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include (i) an election of a species or invention to be examined even though the requirement may be traversed (37 CFR 1.143) and (ii) identification of the claims encompassing the elected invention.

The election of an invention or species may be made with or without traverse. To preserve a right to petition, the election must be made with traverse. If the reply does not distinctly and specifically point out supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election shall be treated as an election without traverse.

Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(i).

The examiner has required restriction between product and process claims. Where applicant elects claims directed to the product, and the product claims are subsequently found allowable, withdrawn process claims that depend from or otherwise require all the limitations of the allowable product claim will be considered for rejoinder. All claims directed to a nonelected process invention must require all the limitations of an allowable product claim for that process invention to be rejoined.

In the event of rejoinder, the requirement for restriction between the product claims and the rejoined process claims will be withdrawn, and the rejoined process claims will be fully examined for patentability in accordance with 37 CFR 1.104. Thus, to be allowable, the rejoined claims must meet all criteria for patentability including the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 101, 102, 103 and 112. Until all claims to the elected product are found allowable, an otherwise proper restriction requirement between product claims and process claims may be maintained. Withdrawn process claims that are not commensurate in scope with an allowable product claim will not be rejoined. See MPEP § 821.04(b). Additionally, in order to retain the right to rejoinder in accordance with the above policy, applicant is advised that the process claims should be amended during prosecution to require the limitations of the product claims. **Failure to do so may result in a loss of the right to rejoinder.** Further, note that the prohibition against double

patenting rejections of 35 U.S.C. 121 does not apply where the restriction requirement is withdrawn by the examiner before the patent issues. See MPEP § 804.01. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Rita J. Desai whose telephone number is 571-272-0684. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday, flex time..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Janet Andres can be reached on 571-272-0867. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Rita J. Desai
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1625

R.D.
March 4, 2008

/Rita J. Desai/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 1625

